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TV Report Says CIA Censored Book Of Former Agent

• Associated Press

Michael Burke has lived an interesting life: he has been president of CBS in Europe, of the New York Yankees and of Madison Square Garden.

No less interesting was his career as an American undercover agent.

But when Burke submitted his autobiography, "Outrageous Good Fortune," to the Central Intelligence Agency for approval, all reference to his efforts to overthrow the communist government of Albania in 1949 was censored, the Cable News Network reported Sunday.

Ironically, said writer David Wise in the report, the British Secret Intelligence Service, commonly known as MI6, permitted the story to be told in "The Great Betrayal," a book just published in England. Burke is identified in this book as the CIA's man in Rome, where he posed as director of a film company that consisted only of a letterhead and a postal box number.

At the CIA, information officer Kathy Pherson said Burke had submitted the book for prepublication review "but we don't discuss the specifics of what was in the book." Asked why not, she said, "because that's between the CIA and the author."

Since Burke had signed a secrecy agreement with the CIA, Wise said, he submitted the book to the agency.

The Supreme Court has ruled that if present and former CIA employees do not clear their material with the agency, their royalties can be taken away by the government.

According to the CNN report, Burke's job was to destabilize Albania by political and paramilitary actions. Albanian exiles were infiltrated by boat into the southern European country, but most of them were rounded up and shot, Wise said.

The writer said Kim Philby, a British intelligence official who was really working for the Soviet Union, is believed to have betrayed the operation.